



VISTA de la MONTAÑA UMC

Echoes

March 2021

Pastor's Pen March 2021

“When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.” Luke 9:51

As I write this Ash Wednesday and the season Lent are approaching. This is the time in the Christian year in terms of the scriptures and preaching we turn our faces to Jerusalem and the Cross. In all 3 of the Synoptic Gospels the story of the Transfiguration is the pivot at which time Jesus turns from teaching and healing to his destiny on the Cross as the expiation for all the sin of all humankind.

March is a similar pivot time in terms of time and weather. In March of every year we have the “Vernal Equinox”, which is the day halfway between the winter and summer solstice. The importance of this for Christians is that the date of Easter is figured as the first Sunday, after the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox”. Most of the time it seems Easter is in March or early April like this year. We pivot then from the sufferings and sacrifice of Jesus towards his teaching of how to live his abundant life here on earth. Indeed March is a time of pivoting.

In terms of weather, it is said of March, “It comes in as a lion and goes out as a lamb”. In this part of Arizona what this means is that we enter March with mild weather and exit it in a low bake headed for the scorching heat of summer. Many times, in my life though the first two weeks of March it has seemed to rain. I hope that is the case this year.

As I write this, another great pivot I believe is about to start. Eleven months ago, we shut down in-person worship. It was only in November we began to open up in a limited way. But as I write this, I know of 30+ members of our congregation who have been vaccinated. This coming weekend dozens more will be. By the end of March and April? Who knows how many, but maybe most who want the vaccine. This means we will be pivoting to fully opening. It will be a great day for us of celebration, but also remembrance of the losses we have suffered personally, as a church and as a nation. It will be a bittersweet time of celebration as we remember the loss and celebrate the future God has in store for us together.

With all of that being said, keep healthy, keep hopeful, and keep within your heart the words of St. Paul who himself suffered so much for the Gospel.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:12-14

Hang in there folks...Our Lord comes!!

Pastor Fred

PS Look forward to Holy Week. Palm Sunday is March 28th. We will have a Good Friday service at 3pm on Friday April 2 and on Easter April 4 a Sunrise service at 7am and regular one at 10am.

Mortgage Challenge Update

Recently you received a letter from me outlining a Lenten Challenge. A faithful and generous member has given a \$38,000 gift to pay down our mortgage principal with the challenge that our congregation match her amazing gift! We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful new meeting place and office space. Soon we will be able to again meet in person and share fellowship, Christian Education and meetings in person in our new building.

We have already received gifts from a member's IRA Required Minimum Distribution. Another donated their entire first stimulus check. We are receiving checks daily to help us reach our goal of \$38,000 from the congregation. We hope you can help us achieve this goal during Lent as your Lenten sacrifice during one of the most critical years in our church family's history. If we match the \$38,000 gift this year, our generous donor will make the same commitment every year for another four years!

We will announce our progress weekly during Lent. As we go to press, our original mortgage principal was \$550,000 and we will owe \$472,521, ending February. Every dollar makes a difference! We have received \$17,146 in matching gifts in February!!

Vista Church has sustained and comforted our members through the pandemic with our wonderful live streamed services, outreach to our members and continued mission projects in our community and with our sister church in Agua Prieta, Mexico. Vista Church "has a heart" and it has never been more evident than during the past year.

In this issue of the Echoes, the Finance Committee has again shared information about online and ACH giving, as well as rewards programs with Fry's and Amazon. (Basha's doesn't have a similar program.) Please check them out, if you haven't taken advantage of these programs in the past.



You Know of Whom I Speak
Stuart Watkins



When I was walking in the desert and a thorn from a mesquite tree scratched my arm,

I thought of the one who had a crown of thorns set upon his head.

You know of whom I speak.

When I climbed the Catalina Mountains for six and a half long hours up and down running out of water and praying to make it home,

I thought of the one who spent forty days in the wilderness.

You know of whom I speak.

A thorn pierced my tennis shoe, not wise to have worn,
and lodged in my big toe and pulling it out was a hurtful act.

I thought of the one who had spikes hammered into his hands and feet.

You know of whom I speak.

My desert hike ended in making it home exhausted,
thirsty, tired and weak,

but somehow stronger in faith remembering Him

Who endured it all for me.

You know of whom I speak.

Rewards Programs

Enrolling in either or both of these programs benefits the church when you make a purchase. We receive a quarterly rebate from both programs.

Fry's Community Rewards

Vista de la Montana UMC is enrolled as a member of Fry's Community Rewards Program. Our Member Number is 22553. Our church will receive a cash rebate quarterly, calculated on how much our members have purchased at Fry's or any Kroger affiliate.

PLEASE NOTE: Before you can link your Fry's V.I.P card to an organization, you must have an email address and an on-line account.

Amazon Smile

You can use your Amazon Smile account when shopping on-line. When you use Amazon smile after you have designated Vista UMC, the church will receive a rebate.

Here is how to do it:

Go to Amazon Smile

Sign in with your Amazon.com credentials.

Choose the Charitable Organization tab and find/select Vista de la Montana UMC.

Start shopping!

If you have questions about either of these programs, please contact Valerie Hammons.

Your Endowment Fund

The numbers are in for 2020 and the Endowment Committee is pleased to announce that our fund delivered an 18.34% return for the year. The return is net of contributions, distributions, and expenses. Based on the average of the returns for the past 3 years, the Endowment Committee will be able to provide \$15,500.00 in 2021 to support special projects, consistent with our charter. This represents the largest amount that Endowment has ever made available.

If you have a project idea that is not currently funded in the operating budget, please work with your respective Church Council chair to prepare a request. The necessary forms are available on the Vista website (<https://www.vistaumc.org/permanent-endowment-fund/>).

Vista's Lenten Study

Walking in the Wilderness, Seeking God During Lent

by Beth A. Richardson will be our Lenten study this year.

The text is available from Upper Room, Cokesbury, Amazon, Christian Book, and others.

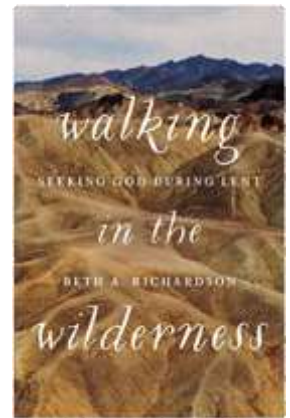
The Upper Room is offering an on-line Lenten Retreat. You can find more information at the link below.

<https://urelearning.upperroom.org/p/walking-in-the-wilderness>

Also, Vista will offer a Zoom discussion on Wednesdays through Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday, Feb 17, at 1 p.m. led by Gail Parson. Whether you take the Upper Room class or not, you may want to join in on this discussion.

This book may be used by an individual for private study as well. There is a guide on page 129 which is the format that will be used for Vista zoom. I also suggest that if you do not want to zoom maybe you could form a discussion group with some folks from your COVID bubble.

Please let Donna Boring know if you wish to be part of Gail's zoom class so that we can send you the codes.



Dinner for Six

We had planned on starting our Dinners for Six this spring. But since we had only five responses, we feel most people are not yet comfortable in even small gatherings.

So... we will delay our dinners until the fall. We will keep you informed.

Meanwhile stay well - and happy.

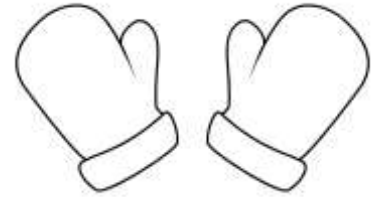
Sandy Schwartz

Joyce Holman

The Warm Bedding/Clothing Drive

Was a huge success. A total of 706 items were donated to this worthy cause during the months of December and January. That included 27 items of bedding, 489 women's items of clothing and 190 men's items of clothing. Items especially appreciated during these cool days and chilly evenings included the following:

Sweaters (women – 33, Men – 4), Sweatshirts (women – 34, men – 7), coats and jackets (women – 20, men – 9) and pairs of socks (women – 161, men – 54). A big THANK YOU to all who responded to this special appeal.



Explore the Many Ways to Give to the Church

Pledges for 2021 are complete for the Stewardship Campaign. There are many ways to give to the Church that make it easier for you as well as helping the church finance team by reducing their workload. Please consider one of the following:

Non-cash Gifts to the Church

Anytime you wish to make a non-cash gift to the Church (i.e. stocks or property), it is **critical that you contact Dennis Kimmel, Financial Secretary for the procedure**. He is in charge of all contributions for the Church. You can complete your general pledge or building pledge through a stock gift, which may provide a tax incentive if you donate appreciated stock.

The Ease of Credit Card and Automatic Bank Giving

You can give to the Church using your credit card for a one-time gift, or set up an automated donation on a one-time, weekly or monthly schedule. To donate, go to our Vista UMC website <http://vistaumc.org/> and on the bottom of the Home page there is a link to our Donation Page. It's safe, secure and easy to use. Not only can you give to the Church, but you can collect miles or points from your credit card! If you have any questions, please call Valerie Hammons, Pastoral Assistant.

ACH – Automated Clearing House

Many of our members give through ACH – Automated Clearing House, which is a monthly direct deposit to the Church from your checking account. *If you would like to do this, please contact Dennis Kimmel, Financial Secretary.*

IRA Gift from your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)

Retirees ages 70 ½ or older can transfer money *tax free* directly from their IRA to a charity such as Vista UMC and it can count towards your RMD (Required Minimum Distribution). It is important to consult your Financial Adviser to set this up properly.

Please consider selecting one of these ways to give, then follow through. The spiritual progress of the church lives on member donations. Step up, be counted!

March 2021 Echoes Finance Committee Article

January 2021 income was \$2,602 over budget and expenses were \$2,945 under budget. General Fund Net Income was \$5,547 over budget after our mortgage principal payment.

We have received an additional 6 pledges for 2021 and our new total is \$417,781 vs. \$447,851 in 2020.

The Finance Committee approved a revised Finance Operations Manual.

Attendance was 260 in person, 1,396 on Live Streaming and approximately 300 on Facebook for a total of over 1900!! That is almost 400 a week.

Included in this issue of Echoes are articles on *Many Ways to Give* and how to use Fry's and Amazon Smile Rewards programs.



EASTER CANDY NEEDED

We will be doing a 'special' event for our Sunday school youth and children. Donations of candy are much appreciated. Drop off in the office or box in the Narthex.

March 2021 Echoes Mission Outreach Ministry

March is here and with it comes the Spring, but it has been a rough winter for many. Because of your generosity we have been able to help some of those in need in our community.

I spoke to Pastor Gela, the pastor of our **Sister Church in Agua Prieta Mexico**, this past week. All are ok, but very concerned that the vaccine is so hard to get, as Mexico does not produce it, so they are trying to get it from a number of countries around the world. No idea when they will get it in Agua Prieta. The other concern is that, under President Biden's administration, the rules regarding the asylum seekers at the US border will change bringing thousands of people to Agua Prieta again, as in 2019, in an attempt to cross the border. Most of these people are very poor and do not have the resources to self-sustain, thus creating a huge burden on the people of Agua Prieta. For years now, their church has helped feed refugees who camp on the sidewalk at the crossing, so as not to lose their spot in line, hoping their names will be called to have their case heard by the US officials. The kitchen in their Community Center has been the source of all the meal preparation by the **Women's Coop**. They, in the past, were supplied all the food materials by the generosity of the congregation, but many are out of work so there is concern about the food cost of this ministry. The **Cement Slab project**, where the portables buildings were before, is going well. The older students are taking work turns every day AM & PM, with 4-hour work shifts, as a way to repay their scholarships. We have sponsored 8 High School Students & 6 University and Tech school Students this semester. We also sent financial assistance for the internet cost, for the online schooling at all grade levels.

We sent **Impact in Catalina**, a check for \$550.00 this past month to the **Food Bank** and got a thank you from them. 380 Families receive food boxes each week. We make this collection on the 1st Sunday of each month for those in our Catalina community area that need our help, especially at this time when so many have lost their jobs. Our **Warm Winter program** provided the **Clothing Bank**, 489 Women's items, 190 items for men, and 27 bedding items for a total of 706 items. Team leader Benith MacPherson did a great job of collecting, recording and delivering these to the Clothing Bank. Giff Tompkins, noted at the Clothing Bank, the bedding items are 1st to go. Next year we will emphasis bedding.

Family 1st received 900 diapers from the good shopping of Team leader Jan Hopke Almer, as well as 60 adult diapers that are in much need. We also sent \$1000 to assist in the support of this ministry.

The Creative Hands team, with the good work of 3 ladies, led by Jan Bohe, has created 115 clothing items for children in the last 4 months that went to between Family 1st and Impact's clothing bank. This is an amazing amount of work for only 3 people. They could sure use more helpful hands. Give Team leader Jan Bohe a call if you can help at 520-825-9725.

Sister Jose Homeless Women's Center, Gene & Diane Bywater, our Team leaders, went shopping with \$300.00 for pop top canned meals to be given out at the Center. We are looking into sturdier carts for the ladies, but the supply is low right now. Here is some data for the year 2020 that shows what a well used facility Sister Jose is: Day Guests 16,582, Breakfasts 10,326, Lunchs 14,985, Showers 6,163, Laundry 3,489, Overnights 5,374, Hot meals 13,291, Daytime rest 1,912, Light suppers 502.

Esperanza en Escalante is a home for homeless and poor US Military Vets and families. Paul Arnett our Team leader, went shopping with the manager, and we supplied a number of household goods that the vets need in their homes such as cleaning supplies, paper goods, etc. These are the requested type of supplies needed at this time. Paul also supplied a new American flag that has flown over the Capitol in Washington DC. They are finishing the construction of 50 new 1, 2, & 3, bedroom houses, which are being occupied. This facility borders Davis Monthan AFB.

We had a great Mission Committee meeting on the 10th of February with 13 members in attendance. We voted to use the Easter offering to help our various Mission Ministries with assistance in the fight against this COVID 19 pandemic. The need is great and we thank you in advance for your care and love for those in need. Next Mission meeting is Wed, March 10th at 1:00 PM in the Elizabeth Room. We will be following all the CDC rules. You are welcome to join us. We thank you for your support which allows us, to show the Face of Christ to our community and beyond.

Yours in Mission service:

Dee Berman ... Mission Outreach Ministry Chairman



Vista's Youth got together on Valentine's Day for an Escape Room Adventure! They safely (with masks and sanitized) gathered in the Elizabeth room to do an Escape Room Project and learned about Agape Love! Great Fun! Thanks to Peggy Jo Harwick!

March Celebrations

Anniversaries

VENHUIZEN, Ronald & Juan	03/06
CARPENTER, Boyd & Karon	03/10
OLSON, Ron & Linda	03/15
KELLEY, Ed & Lynn	03/18
MCCOTTER, Stephen	03/27
ZELLO-MCCOTTER, Linda	03/27
ARNETT, Paul & Janet	03/28

Birthdays

ALLIGOOD, David	03/01
HOLMAN Sr., Jim	03/02
ZEBAL, Liz	03/05
HEDRICK, Jim	03/06
BIXBY, Dave	03/07
BRETZ, Linda	03/09
LOGAN, Bob	03/09
BRACKETT, Nancy	03/10
KELLY, Cayla	03/11
PHILLIPPI, Lou	03/11
VERMILYE, Joel	03/11
ALLEN, Bill	03/12
ARNETT, Janet	03/12
HAMPTON, Fran	03/13
MILLER, Barbara	03/13
DETHMAN, Esther	03/14
ROBERSON, Walt	03/17
RUFFINI, Susan	03/18
RICE, Pete	03/19
STUMP, Jane	03/20
LENZINI, Marty	03/23
SANDERS, Marshall	03/23
CROWN, John	03/24
EXTRACT, Alexis	03/24
BAUM, Fred	03/25
ALLEN, Marge	03/27
ALLEN, Olivia	03/27
COLBY, Dottie Lou	03/27
SCHWARTZ, Pete	03/28
SPENCER, Phyllis	03/29
AUGUST, Alice	03/31





April Celebrations

Anniversaries

RUPE, Marvin & Jean	04/03
HUNT, Ken & Sharon	04/09
BRINDLE, Delores & Kermit	04/13
PHILLIPPI, Lou & Nancy	04/20
YOUNG, Joe & June	04/21
LITTLE, Don & Betty	04/29
MARSH, Dan	04/29

Birthdays

NEVINS, Ilene	04/02
BUKES, Janet	04/03
BELLAH, Bill	04/05
SMITH, Leo	04/06
BESCH, Jo Anne	04/07
OLSON, Linda	04/07
PHILLIPPI, Nancy	04/07
ROOKER, Joanie	04/07
EXTRACT, Clif	04/08
WARD, Linda	04/09
SIMON, Jim	04/11
ZELLO-MCCOTTER, Linda Eva	04/12
COOKE, Lois	04/14
RYTTER, Jane	04/17
WATTS, Beler	04/17
TERRY, Cliff	04/18
JACKSON, Jim	04/22
LANGWIG, Donna	04/22
MILLER, Linda	04/23
MOYER, Michael	04/24
OBEAR, JoAnn	04/26
SALAVA, Fern	04/27
ICEMAN, Dennis	04/29
REYNOLDS, Richard	04/29

Happy Birthday!

VISTA de la MONTAÑA UMC

3001 EAST MIRAVISTA LANE

TUCSON, AZ 85739

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY

9:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M.

PHONE 520-825-1985

E-mail: VistaUMC@aol.com

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK

AND AT OUR WEBSITE:

www.Vistaumc.org



March 2021

NON PROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

TUCSON, AZ

PERMIT #648

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



We're a Family
Come Join Us!

Vista Church
Easter Services
3001 E Miravista Ln.
@ 15000 N. Oracle Rd

Good Friday (April 2)
3pm

Easter Sunday (April 4)
7:00am (Outside/Sunrise) & 10:00am (Live Streamed)

Masks required – safe distanced seating
Reservations suggested
www.vistaumc.org or 520-825-1985

